



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer-
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

At its meeting held February 6, 2008, the Board took the following action:

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Supervisor Molina made the following statement:

“Plastic carryout bags have a significant negative impact on wildlife and the environment. The California Integrated Waste Management Board found that Los Angeles County uses enough plastic bags to form a string long enough to reach the moon and back five times. That’s the equivalent of a string of plastic bags 2,388,569 miles long.

“Last week the Board approved a policy aimed at reducing the use of plastic carryout bags in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The policy set the thresholds for participation in the program and voluntary reduction goals. While this policy is a step in the right direction, our Board requires additional information, which is critical to adequately assess the impacts a 30 percent and a 65 percent reduction will have on the overall proliferation of plastic bag litter, such as the number of grocery and retail stores in the unincorporated areas, which would be subject to the policy. This information is essential in assessing if the Board’s policy will have any meaningful reduction in the use of plastic carryout bags.

“The unincorporated areas of my District do not have many grocery and retail stores fitting the provisions for inclusion under AB 2449. In fact, the majority of the residents in my unincorporated areas shop at small family owned neighborhood stores. Consequently, as currently defined, a 65 percent reduction in the use of plastic carryout bags in the unincorporated areas of my District may be meaningless in its impact on reducing actual plastic bag litter.

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“The unincorporated areas in my District are surrounded by the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers, and are subject to a number of Total Maximum Daily Loads requirements by the Regional Water Board, including a zero trash limit. Our Department of Public Works has been struggling to meet these requirements for some time. The County is currently considering a parcel fee to help fund water quality improvements as our existing sources are not sufficient to meet our obligations. The more effective we are in reducing the usage of plastic bags in our unincorporated areas, the less public funds we will need to spend to meet our clean up requirements.”

Therefore, Supervisor Molina made a motion that the Board instruct the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Public Works to do the following actions:

1. Report back within 60 days on the following:
 - A listing of stores in the unincorporated areas that will be subject to the County’s plastic bag policy;
 - The methodology that will be used to monitor, track and evaluate the progress these stores are making in meeting the Board’s policy’s goals; and
 - A listing of the grocery and retail stores not subject to the policy by relying on information from public health and business licenses; and
2. Request the plastic bag working group to evaluate other methods to reduce the use of plastic carryout bags in smaller stores located in the unincorporated areas of the County. At a minimum, evaluate instituting a standard prohibition on the use of plastic bags via the County’s business licensing and conditional use permits.

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Supervisor Antonovich made the following statement:

“Recently the Board of Supervisors adopted a comprehensive policy to reduce significantly the use of plastic bags in County unincorporated areas. The proposed motion (Item 6) provides additional direction to County staff and the Plastic Bag Working Group regarding implementation of the Board-approved policy. It is important that elected officials be kept informed of the on going work of the Plastic Bag Working Group and staff, that the workings of this Group be consistent with State environmental laws, and that any proposed restrictions applied to all future County permits be reviewed and considered by the Board before adoption.”

Therefore, Supervisor Antonovich made a suggestion that Supervisor Molina’s motion be amended to further direct the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Public Works to:

1. Invite representatives from all Board offices to all scheduled meetings of the Plastic Bag Working Group;
2. Forward to the Board written reports of the deliberations of every Plastic Bag Working Group meeting;
3. Prepare the appropriate California Environmental Quality Act clearance relative to the environmental impacts of any alternatives to disposable plastic bags (paper bags, compostable plastic bags, reusable bags, or other alternatives); and
4. Bring back to the Board for deliberation any prohibition on plastic bags that is proposed to be required on all future Conditional Use Permits and business licenses.

Supervisor Molina’s motion, as amended, seconded by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, was unanimously carried.

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Copies distributed:

Each Supervisor
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Director of Public Works